

# ABE Consortium Narrative Requirements

## Introduction and Purpose

This section applies to only those consortia that are required to submit a multi-year narrative. The consortium narrative is designed to give selected ABE consortia and new or reorganized applicants for ABE funding an opportunity to review and describe program results, successes, and organizational structure, adherence to state and federal requirements, and future plans. Along with other sections of the annual consortium application, the narrative will be evaluated in order to make decisions about new or continuing multi-year consortium approval and funding. ABE consortium narratives received by the deadline will be rated by a team of reviewers according to the application evaluation criteria specified in Minnesota Statutes, Section 124D.52 and in the Minnesota State Plan for ABE. This narrative combines basic legal requirements and identifies areas of best practice for ABE consortia. Check the Table at the end of the document to see the list of consortia that must submit narratives.

**Please Note: The Narrative is a separate submission from the Grant Application. The Narrative is submitted as a separate document to the ABE State Office. Please see “Submitting Narrative” for specific instructions.**

## Categories of ABE Narrative Applicants

1. ***New Consortium*** – includes first-time applicants, ABE programs that have previously been a member of an approved ABE Consortium that are applying to become a new, restructured consortium, and ABE programs seeking authorization due to performance issues.
2. ***Continuing Consortium*** – currently approved ABE consortium seeking multi-year approval status. A calendar showing due dates for consortia seeking multi-year approval is provided at the end of this document.

## Narrative Requirements

1. New consortia (first time applicants for ABE funding), existing programs that are restructuring and programs that are seeking authorization due to performance issues must show evidence of administrative and programmatic capacity by submitting the following information:
   1. Complete consortium multi-year ABE Narrative, including a completed Section Ten (see description later in the document), which gives reviewers additional information about the program (hard copies submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education)
   2. Complete consortium annual ABE Grant Application (submitted electronically to the Minnesota Department of Education)
2. Continuing consortia must submit:
3. Consortium multi-year ABE Narrative, Sections One through Nine (hard copies submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education)
4. Complete consortium annual ABE Grant Application (submitted electronically to the Minnesota Department of Education)

## Submitting Narrative

ABE consortia submitting narratives can either submit electronic narratives (with prior approval by Brad Hasskamp) or hard copies of the narrative.

**The ABE Narrative is a separate submission from the annual ABE consortium grant application.**

### For electronic submission:

The web address of the completed narrative must be received by Brad Hasskamp at the Minnesota Department of Education by 4:30 p.m., June 1, 2016. This web address must have all the required components and be accessible for reviewers. ABE consortia wanting to submit narratives electronically must have prior approval by Brad Hasskamp at the Minnesota Department of Education.

Brad Hasskamp

[Brad.hasskamp@state.mn.us](mailto:Brad.hasskamp@state.mn.us)

(651) 582-8594

### For hard copy submission:

6 hard copies of the complete narrative must be received by Brad Hasskamp at the Minnesota Department of Education by 4:30 p.m., June 1, 2016. Follow the guidelines and instructions in this document. The narrative should be submitted to:

Brad Hasskamp, Adult Basic Education

Adult Basic Education

1500 Highway 36 West

Roseville, MN 55113

Failure to meet the June 1 deadline will put a consortium’s funding at risk.

## Consortium Narrative Format

Provide required attachments and documentation, and briefly describe each narrative content area. For readability (for the review team), the state ABE office recommends:

* Use 12-point type.
* Bind copies (either with a spiral bind, a 1-2” binder, or some other easy-to-read format).
* Follow the sequence and format of the narrative.
* Label sections, documents and other attachments with dividers and tabs.
* For each section, put documents and then narrative question responses.

## Questions or For More Information

If you have questions or would like more information about the ABE Narrative, please:

* Review information found at the [Minnesota ABE web site](http://www.mnabe.org) (www.mnabe.org), especially the [Narrative page](http://www.mnabe.org/program-management/grants/narrative) (www.mnabe.org/program-management/grants/narrative); and/or
* Contact Cherie Eichinger, ABE Administrative Support at (651) 582-8378 or [cherie.eichinger@state.mn.us](mailto:cherie.eichinger@state.mn.us).

# Consortium Narrative Content

## Section One: Program Overview

***Document*** *–* Provide the following:

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| A | Please provide a **brief overview** of the **consortium,** similar to an executive summary. What basic information should people know about the consortium? (This section should be 1-2 pages.)   1. What **area** does the consortium cover? 2. Describe the current levels of **staffing**, full-time versus part-time paid and non-paid employees and volunteers for the entire consortium. 3. Describe the ABE **students** the consortium typically serves, including culture, education, goals, and other important factors. |

## Section Two: Program and Student Accountability

***Narrative Questions*** *–* Answer the following questions. Answers should provide sufficient detail for reviewers to understand the program’s intent and strategies for each concept presented:

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| 2.1 | In adherence with the [ABE Contact Hour Policy](http://mnabe.org/sites/default/files/ABE_Contact_Hour_Policy.doc), explain how student contact hours are recorded and verified for intake, orientation, assessment, daily attendance, distance learning and any other allowable time. Refer to Attachment F in your explanation, the student attendance sheet example. |
| 2.2. | What is your program quality/accountability plan for main fiscal agent sites and all sub-grantees? Accountability plans should include:   1. How does the fiscal agent ensure that the ABE consortium and all its sub-grantees are in compliance with federal and state ABE law, policy and guidance? 2. How often is the consortium’s performance data monitored (especially information found in the state ABE database reports like the National Reporting System (NRS) Tables A, 4, and 4b and others)? 3. How is program performance data monitored at the agency-, site-, teacher-, and/or class-levels? 4. How and when do you share and communicate your NRS outcome and enrollment data with other staff and stakeholders? 5. How has the consortium implemented the [ABE Student Progress Policy](http://mnabe.org/sites/default/files/Student_Progress_Policy_-_final_9-19-07.doc)? If this is addressed in your assessment or attendance policy, please refer to the policy and page number and/or section. |
| 2.3 | In what roles do you use volunteers in your program (i.e. instruction, teaching assistance, intake, goal-setting, assessment, data entry, etc.)?   1. How do you orient and train potential volunteers in your consortium for these roles? (Can refer to Document I.) 2. What training do you provide or require on an ongoing basis for volunteers in the consortium, locally and/or through other entities? (In adherence to di the Volunteer Training Standards Policy at www.mnabe.org/program-management/law-policy-guidance.) |

***Documents*** *–* Provide the following **local program policies**, which are rules and procedures that apply to consortium programming; describe how the policies are implemented in the program and how these policies are communicated to staff and students (if applicable).

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| B | Student orientation and intake policy (see [Local ABE Consortium Student Orientation and Intake Policy - Template](http://www.mnabe.org/sites/default/files/Student_Orientation_and_Intake_Template.doc) and [Local ABE Program examples](http://www.mnabe.org/program-management/local-abe-program-information)) |
| C | Assessment policy (see [Local ABE Consortium Assessment Policy - Template](http://www.mnabe.org/sites/default/files/Assessment_Policy_Template.doc) and [Local ABE Program examples](http://www.mnabe.org/program-management/local-abe-program-information)) |
| D | Student attendance policy (see [Local ABE Consortium Student Attendance Policy - Template](http://www.mnabe.org/sites/default/files/Student_Attendance_Policy.doc) and [Local ABE Program examples](http://www.mnabe.org/program-management/local-abe-program-information)) |

***Additional Documents*** *–* Provide the following documents:

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| E | Student attendance contract (see [Local ABE Program examples](http://www.mnabe.org/program-management/local-abe-program-information)) |
| F | A sample student attendance sheet that is completed – remove students’ identifying information |
| G | Student intake or initial registration form(s) |
| H | Personal Education Plan (PEP) or goal-setting form(s) and/or procedure |
| I | Volunteer orientation and training plan (Additional approval required for programs that use volunteers to deliver instruction but are not using the Minnesota Literacy Council’s (MLC) volunteer training. Other programs should still include their local volunteer orientation and training plan here. See also Narrative Question 2.3); For more information, please review the [Volunteer Training Standards Policy](http://mnabe.org/sites/default/files/ABE_Volunteer_Training_Standards_Policy.doc) found on the [Minnesota ABE Law, Policy and Guidance page](http://www.mnabe.org/program-management/law-policy-guidance) (www.mnabe.org/program-management/law-policy-guidance). |

## Section Three: Staff and Professional Development

***Narrative Questions*** *–* Answer the following questions. Answers should provide sufficient detail for reviewers to understand the program’s intent and strategies for each concept presented:

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| 3.1 | Describe the process used to identify the PD objectives in the consortium PD plan. |
| 3.2 | Detail the amount and percent of total funding that the consortium sets aside or uses for professional development. Consortia can use recent years’ data as examples for a typical year. Percentages and amounts should be for the entire consortium either collectively or individually by organization/site to include fiscal agent and sub-grantees. |
| 3.3 | Describe the process and criteria (e.g., licensure, education, credentials, experience, etc.) used in hiring decisions related to paid instructional staff.   1. How do you ensure that school district instructional staff holds current K-12 licenses? |
| 3.4 | Describe the new staff orientation process and information included. |
| 3.5 | How does the consortium develop and revise individual staff professional development plans? |
| 3.6 | Please list professional development opportunities that are promoted and/or supported by the consortium in some way. Estimate numbers or percentages of staff that participate in each activity in a typical year. Opportunities noted should include:   1. Local or consortium-developed ABE-focused activities; 2. Broader education-focused local school districts’ professional development; 3. ABE-focused professional development provided by the Minnesota Department of Education and supplemental services, such as ATLAS regional events or Literacy Action Network’s Summer Institute; 4. Online professional development opportunities; and 5. Other professional development.   Please note:   1. Which professional development activities are mandatory and which are optional for ABE staff? 2. How does the consortium decide which opportunities to make mandatory? 3. How does the consortium promote professional development opportunities to staff? |
| 3.7 | What professional development challenges is the consortium experiencing?   1. How are these challenges being addressed? |

***Documents*** *–* Provide the following documentation:

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| J | Professional development plan for the consortium that outlines the consortium’s priorities and goals for professional development |

Provide a complete professional development plan (complete with goals for professional development, rationale, activities, and evaluation measures) for a staff member in each of the following roles:

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| K | Administrative staff – e.g., program or site manager |
| L | Support staff – e.g., intake coordinator |
| M | Instructional staff – e.g., teacher |

NOTE: Remove any identifying personal information from the plans

## Section Four: Instructional Program Description

***Narrative Questions*** *–* Answer the following question. Answers should provide sufficient detail for reviewers to understand the program’s intent and strategies for each concept presented:

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| 4.1 | Explain who developed the instructional program descriptions and how the descriptions are communicated and revised with instructors and other staff. |
| 4.2 | How do you ensure that the Adult Literacy Hotline (Minnesota Literacy Council) has the most up-to-date information about your consortium, its sites and its programming? |
| 4.3 | Summarize your consortium’s current transitions programming, including Pathways 2 Prosperity (FastTRAC) grant projects, postsecondary readiness, employability skills and career awareness. You can also refer directly to pages in Document N. |

***Document*** *–* Provide the following local program information – applicants must use the following:

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| N | Instructional Program Description that shows the objectives, format, standards, assessments and other details for each class or type of instruction offered in the consortium (see [Instructional Program Description – Template](http://www.mnabe.org/sites/default/files/Instructional_Program_Description_Template_2.doc) and the [Course Description Template](http://www.mnabe.org/sites/default/files/Instructional_Program_Description_Template.doc)). |

## Section Five: Program Governance and Coordination

***Narrative Questions*** *–* Answer the following questions:

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| 5.1 | Describe the governance and decision-making processes in place between the consortium fiscal agent and its formal members. This section can include an organizational chart.   1. Describe the purpose, frequency, invited attendees and required attendees at consortium-wide meetings. A consortium-wide meeting involves members discussing consortium governance and operational procedures. For additional detail, please refer to Minnesota State Statute 124D.521(a). 2. Describe how and when the annual consortium agreement gets developed and signed by your consortium and its members. |
| 5.2 | Describe your consortium’s marketing and outreach plans and/or strategies. |

***Document*** *–* Provide the following:

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| O | Consortium annual agreement with member districts and/or organizations |

## Section Six: Program Partnerships and Collaboration

***Narrative Questions*** *–* Answer the following questions:

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| 6.1 | Explain the extent and nature of staff and program collaboration with other applicable organizations, such as the local K-12 system, WorkForce Centers, Workforce Development Board (WDB), MFIP employment counselors, post-secondary education/training institutions, local businesses, labor associations/organizations, industry and employment-training agencies or family education providers (excluding local and county corrections). This should also include participation of staff on Literacy Action Network committees, local boards or councils, or other statewide committees. |
| 6.2 | Describe the resources, other than state and federal aid, that you use to supplement ABE programming (excluding local and county corrections). This should include coordination with external partners to provide support services to meet students’ needs, such as transportation, convenient class locations and childcare. |
| 6.3 | How do you collaborate with local and county correctional facilities?   1. Describe or include the instructional content and schedule(s) if ABE programming is occurring in local and county correctional facilities (can refer to course descriptions in Section 4 Document N). 2. Describe the type of support received from the correctional institution, including financial. |
| 6.4 | Describe your consortium’s role in developing and implementing your regional Transitions 3.0 plan. |

***Documents*** *–* Provide the following:

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| P | Most recent Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the local Workforce Center |
| Q | Attach a list of your local Workforce Development Board (WDB) members |
| R | Current year regional aid plan for Transitions 3.0 |

## Section Seven: Technology and Distance Learning Plan

***Document*** *–*

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| S | Include a five-year Technology Plan. The plan should include   1. A description of current technology resources available for ABE programming and a description of resources needed in the next five years; 2. A description of staff technology expectations; 3. A description of how staff are trained to use technology; 4. A description of the how the program provides access to technology for students; 5. A description of how technology skills are integrated into core literacy instruction; and 6. Details on which distance learning programs are used in your consortium and your future plans with distance learning. |

## Section Eight: Future Plans and Issues

***Documents*** *–* Provide the following:

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| T | The Program Future Plan should provide sufficient detail for reviewers to understand the program’s intent and strategies for each concept presented, which should align or complement PD, technology and other objectives (see also [Section Eight Notes](http://www.mnabe.org/sites/default/files/2011_ABE_Narrative_Section_Six_Notes.doc) and [ABE Future Plans Template](http://www.mnabe.org/sites/default/files/ABE_Future_Plans_Template.doc)):   1. What are your consortium’s top three to five changes or areas of improvement that it will focus on in the near future? 2. How do you plan on addressing these changes or areas? Please include a brief timeline with:    1. Proposed strategies aligned with the changes/areas of improvement;    2. Who will lead the strategy;    3. Who will be involved in implementing the strategy;    4. What resources are needed to succeed; and    5. What intermediate and long-term outcomes you expect in achieving the strategy. |

## Section Nine: Annual Consortium Grant Application

***Documents*** *–* Provide the following:

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| U | Please attach a hard copy of your consortium’s annual ABE grant application, including all the NRS tables submitted in your grant application. |
| V | A copy of each consortium sub-grantee’s NRS Table 4 (A sub-grantee is any entity that receives state and/or federal ABE funding from the consortium fiscal agent as a downstream ABE services provider.) |
| W | A copy of the current grant assurances from the annual ABE consortium grant RFP |

## Section Ten: Additional Information for Programs Seeking New Authorization

### (Continuing Programs are not required to complete this section)

***Narrative Questions*** *–* Answer the following questions. Answers should provide sufficient detail for reviewers to understand the program’s intent and strategies for each concept presented:

| ***Label*** | ***Description*** |
| --- | --- |
| 10.1 | Identify your consortium’s classification in seeking authorization as either: First-time applicants; ABE programs that have previously been a member of an approved ABE Consortium that are applying to become a new, restructured consortium; or ABE programs seeking authorization due to performance issues. |
| 10.2 | What geographic area would the applying program cover?   1. What adult student populations would your program serve? 2. How would the program collaborate with existing consortia in the same geographic region? 3. Why does it make more sense for the program to apply as a separate consortium instead of merging with another existing consortium? |
| 10.3 | Describe what actions your program has taken to familiarize staff with the ABE system |
| 10.4 | What information or data is available for the state to determine first prior year contact hours? First prior year is from May 1, 2014 to April 30, 2015. |
| 10.5 | Describe the process the program would use to effectively record program data and monitor program performance in the state ABE database. |
| 10.6 | Has the program been identified as a low-performing program previously? If so, please include details of your program’s history as a low-performing program or in provisional approval status.   1. If so, what have you done to improve your program’s performance? |

## ABE Consortia Narrative Schedule

| **Due 6/2016** | **Recompete:** All Current and Potential Consortia Submit Competitive Application | DRAFT Due 6/2018 | DRAFT Due 6/2019 | DRAFT Due 6/2020 | DRAFT Due 6/2021 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **American Indian OIC** 2. **Department of Corrections** 3. **Faribault County** 4. **Central MN-St. Cloud** 5. **Rosemount/Apple Valley/Eagan** 6. **South Washington County** 7. **SE ABE-Owatonna** | 1. AEOA 2. Burnsville 3. Dakota Prairie-Farmington 4. Lakes & Prairie-Wadena 5. Lakeville 6. Lincoln-International Education Center 7. NW Service Cooperative 8. Osseo 9. South Suburban-South St. Paul | * 1. Alexandria   2. AOIE-Hopkins   3. Carver Scott   4. Detroit Lakes   5. Duluth   6. Metro East-North St. Paul   7. Hiawatha Valley-Red Wing   8. Rochester   9. St. Paul   10. West-Monticello | 1. AALC-LeSueur 2. Cass Lake 3. Fergus Falls 4. Mankato 5. Moorhead 6. Robbinsdale 7. SW ABE 8. Tri-County Corrections | 1. Brainerd 2. Communications Services for the Deaf 3. Glacial Lakes-Willmar 4. Hastings 5. Metro North-Anoka 6. Metro South-Bloomington 7. Minneapolis 8. Red Lake 9. White Earth |